Lesson 2: How to Create Your Own Brushes

Adding new brushed you create is fun way to add your own creative touch to your Designer skillset. In this lesson, we'll show you how to create a simple tree shape and turn it into a brush.

Then, we'll create a scene and use our new brush to show you how it's done.

Ready to start?

 Create a **New Document** to these specifics (or use **Ctrl/Cmd+N**):

- **Web - CD Digital Release**

- **Transparent background** (*checked*)

Now, we're going to create a simple tree shape. To do this, we'll use the Triangle Tool and make three triangles on top of each other. Then, we'll use the Rectangle Tool to make the trunk. Then, we'll transform this shape into a brush.

Here we go.

 Go to the **Toolbar** (right side) and *click* on **Snapping** (see yellow rectangle) so it's active. It'll be active when its button is depressed (or darkened).
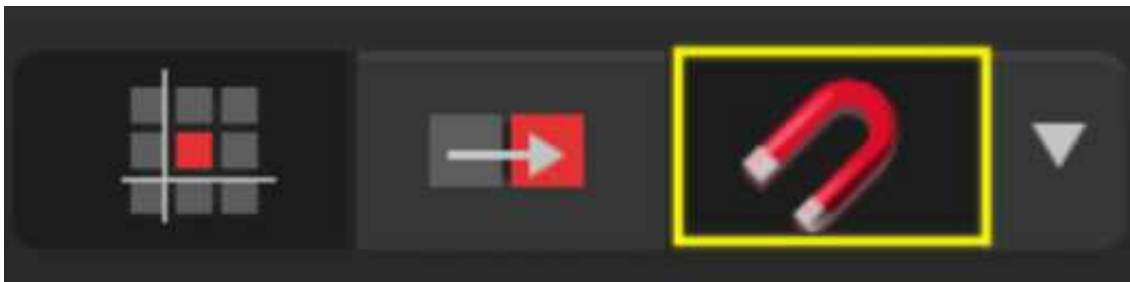
 Click on the **Triangle Tool** so it's active.

 *Click* & *drag* out a **Triangle shape** on the document. Keep the size about 1/4 the height of the document.

 Press **Ctrl/Cmd+J** twice to *duplicate* it two times. You can't see the other two duplicated triangles yet because they are on top of the original triangle.

Click on the **Move Tool** so it's active (or double-click on the canvas area). We are now going to move the two duplicated triangles straight down to create our tree shape.

Click on the **Triangle shape** & *drag* the **cursor** down to create a shape with two triangles sitting on top of each other.

Repeat the **previous step** but move this triangle below the now middle triangle.

Make your three triangles look like this image below. This is our tree. If we wanted to make it better, maybe we'd make the lower two triangle "branches" slightly wider than the top portion. But, for this lesson, we'll keep it to the basics.
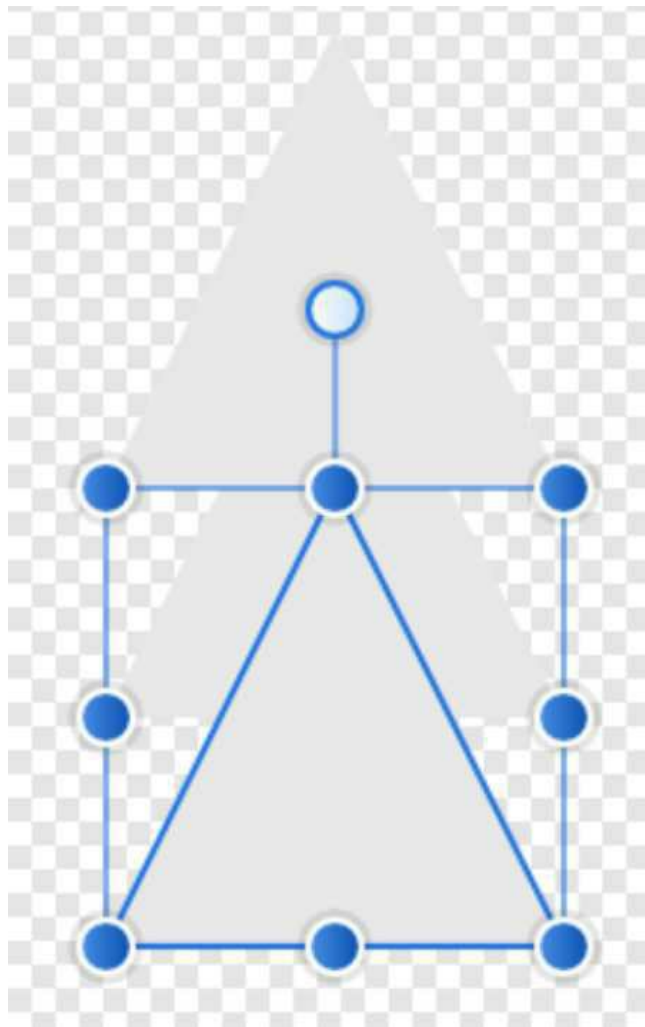

Double-click on the **canvas** so none of the layers are selected. See this

image below for what your Layers Panel should look like after you do this action.
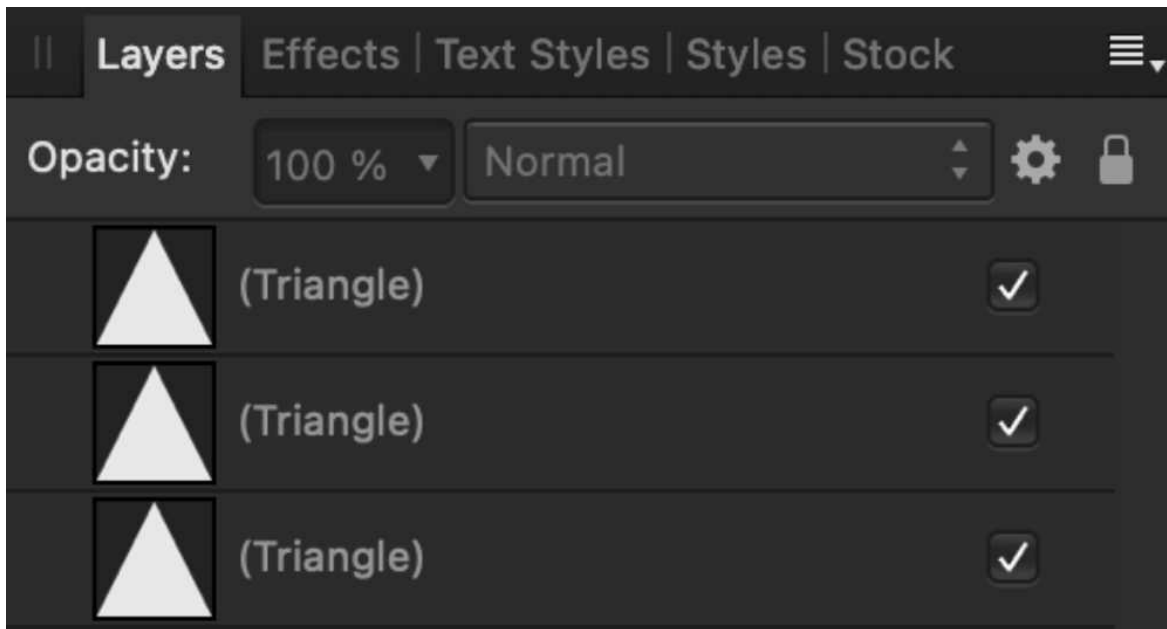
   Click on the **Rectangle Tool** and *click* & *drag* out a **tall rectangle shape** in the position where the trunk would be. Don't worry if it's not perfectly centered.

   Click on the new **Rectangle shape** & *drag* it to the **exact center** of the tree. Because Snapping is active, you'll see guidelines to show you when the shape is perfectly aligned with the other shapes.
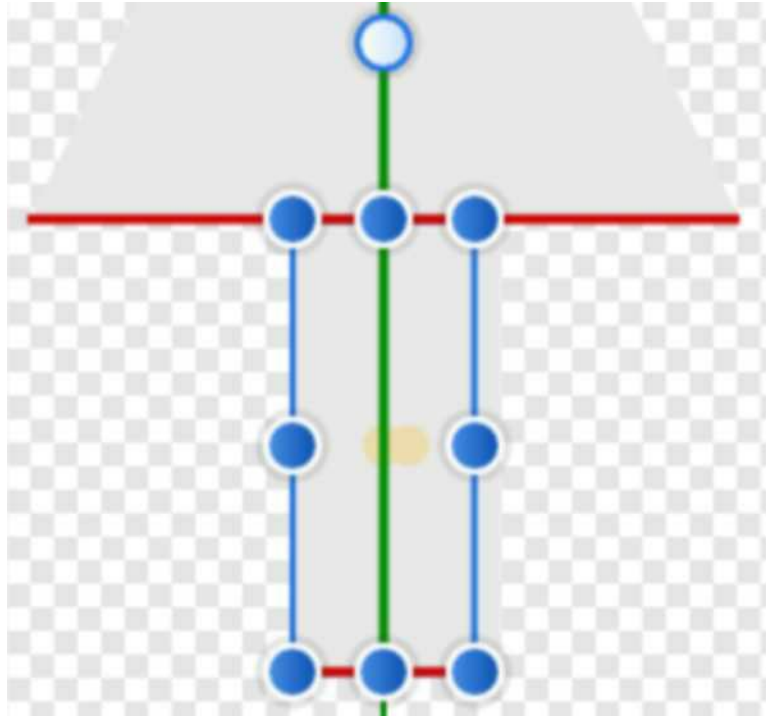
Now, we're going to use the Boolean Tools and make these four stacked shapes combine into one shape. Do you know the Boolean Tool we're going to use to combine all?

 Click on the **Move Tool** and *click* & *drag* a **selection** over the entire four shapes on our document so all are selected. You can also select the four shapes by *clicking* on the **top layer** in the Layers Panel and then while *holding-down* the **Shift key** *click* on the **bottom layer**. This will select all layers from the top to the bottom.
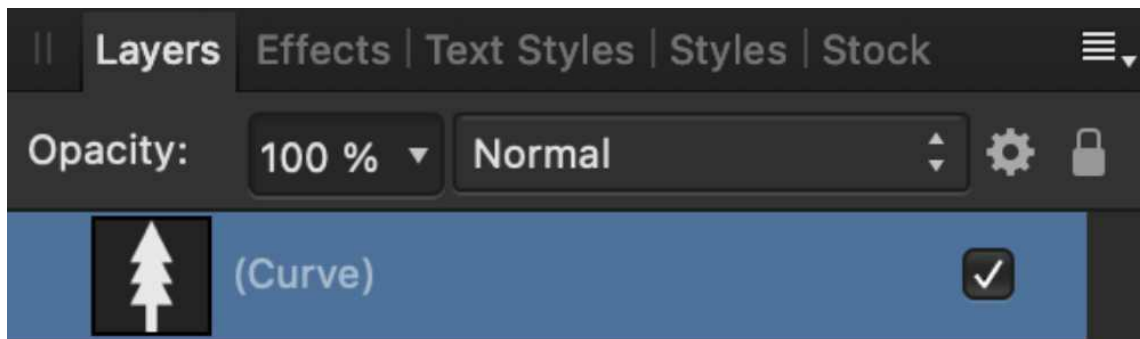
This is what your Layers Panel should look like now:
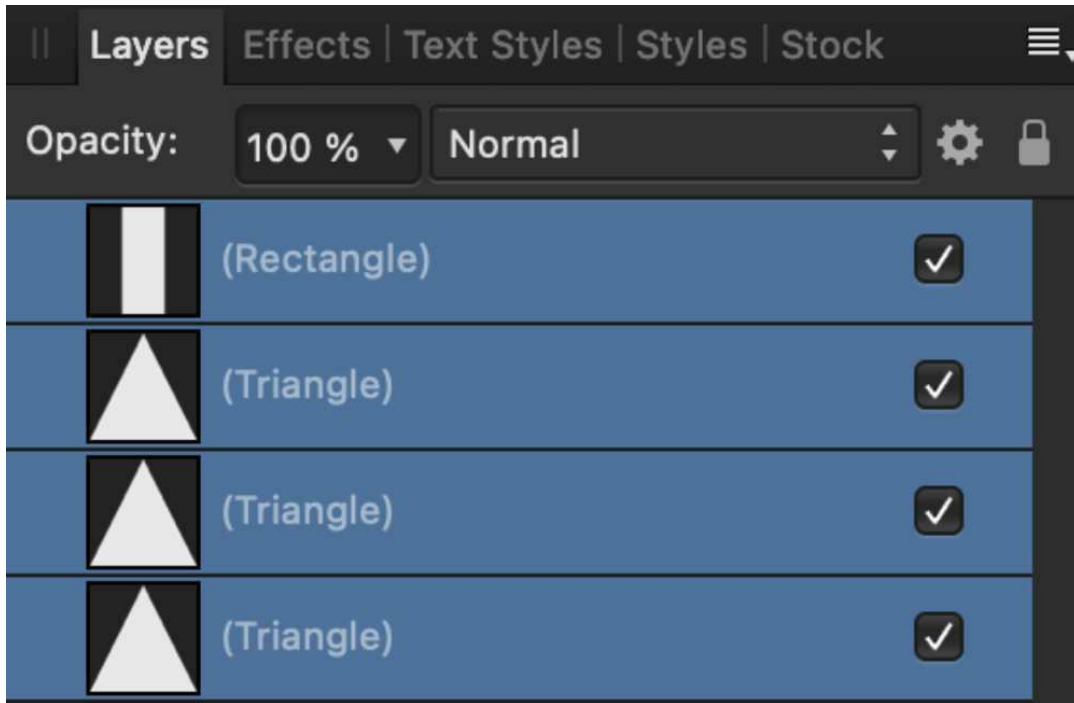
Go to the far right side of the **Toolbar** and *click* on the **Add** Boolean Tool. This will combine all shapes into a single shape.
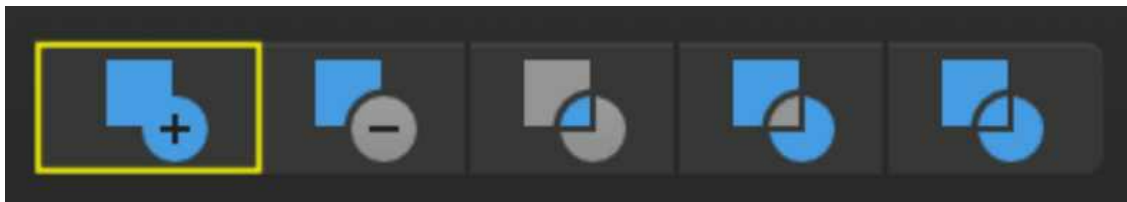
Look at the Layers Panel now. See how our four shapes are now only one?

Great. Now that we've created the shape of our tree brush, we need to export it into a folder on our desktop. Then, we'll upload this saved tree brush into our Designer program. After that, we'll use this brush and edit it so it'll do exactly what we want.

Let's continue...

Go to the left side of the **Toolbar** where the three Personas are located.

*Click* on the right-side **Export Persona**.

When you enter this Persona, the first tool that'll be selected is the Slice Tool. This tool allows us to draw a selection over just the part of the document we want to export into a new location. This is a very helpful tool considering our document is a very large 3,000 x 3,000 pixels in size. This will lower the file size of our tree shape - which we prefer. The Slice Tool works just like the Move Tool.

Click & *drag* a **square selection** over the tree shape. Try to make the borders of the Slice Tool fit as closely to the tree as possible.

882x2234, "slice1", PNG,
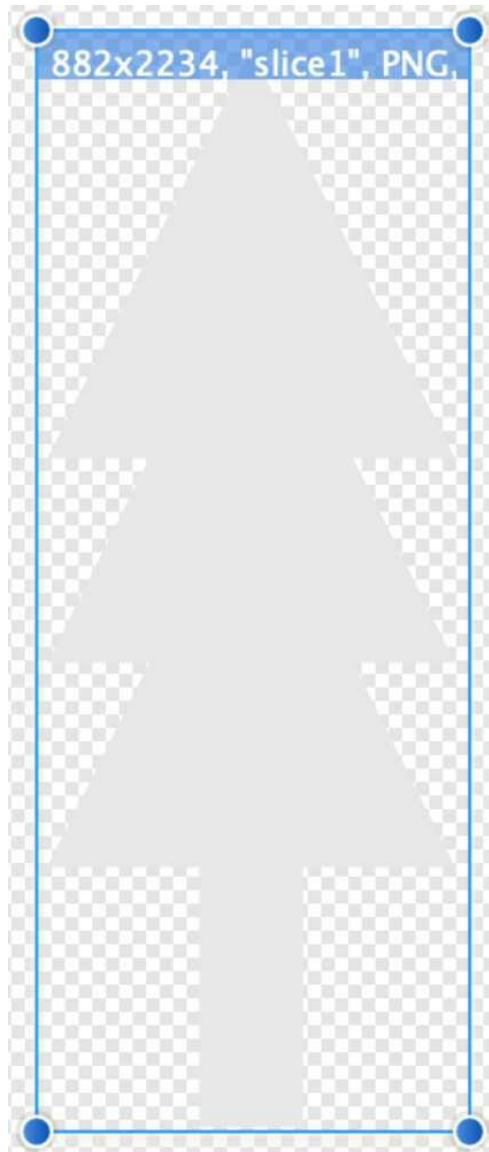
Go to the **Layers Panel** and *look* how there's a **new tab** named slice1. This new panel shows you the object we literally sliced out of the whole document. This is a helpful function in Designer.

Click on the **Export button** on the right-side of the slice layer (see the small yellow square in the below image). This will open a folder location where we can export our tree.
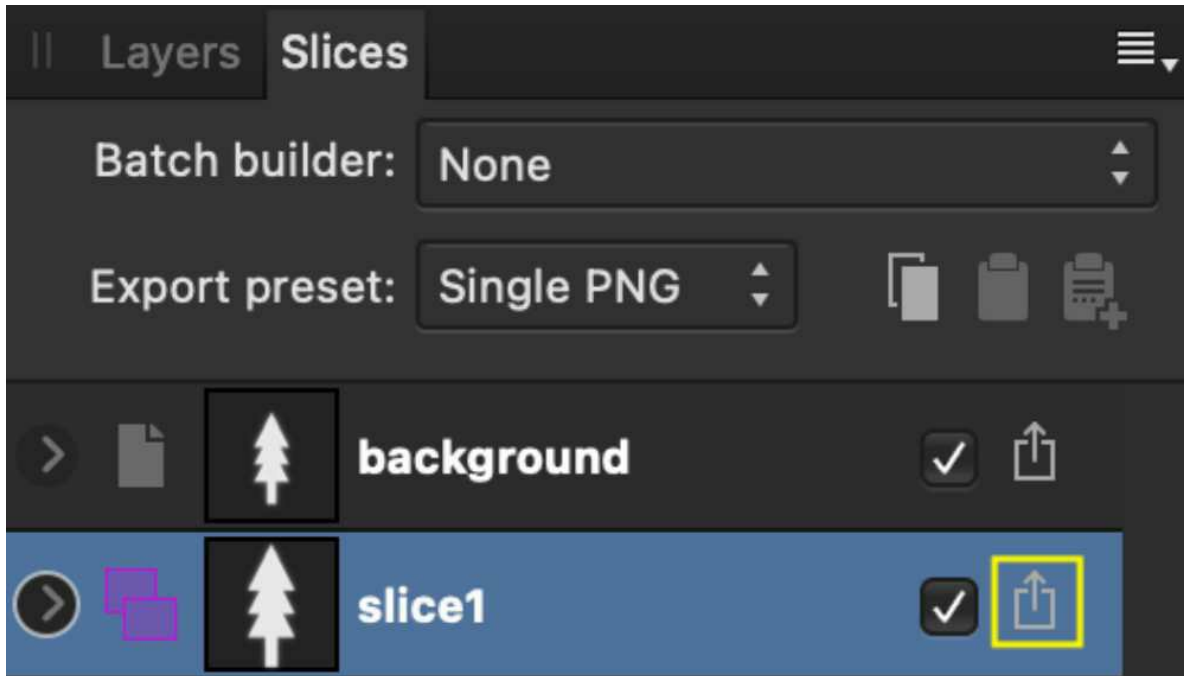
Type **Tree Brush** as the **Save As...** file. *Place* it in a **folder** of your choosing. For this lesson, we created a new folder (see yellow rectangle in the below image).

Press **Export** when you're done finding its new home (see the white rectangle).
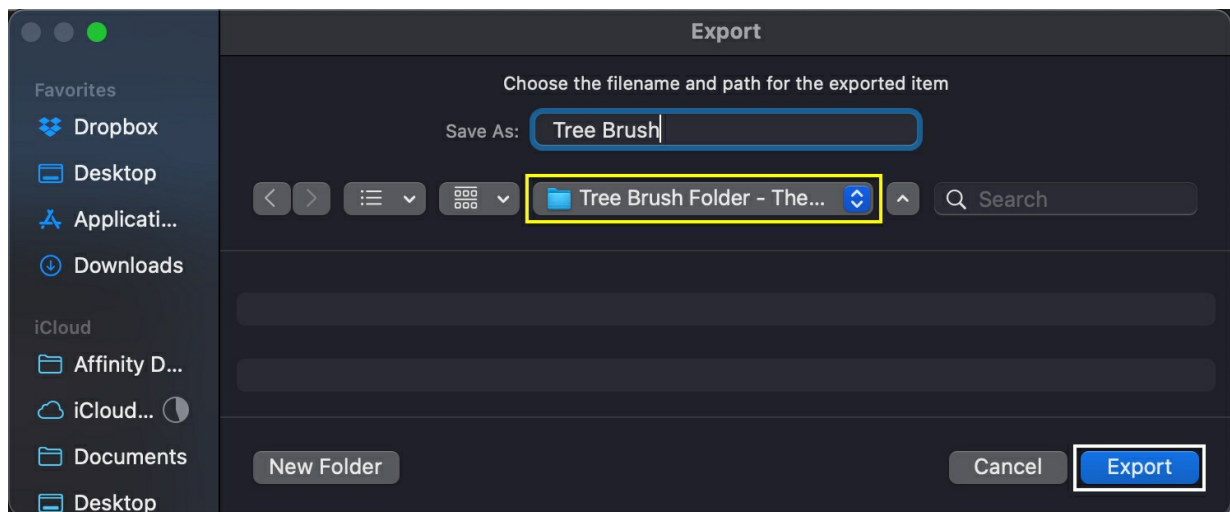
We're now done creating our brush file. But, let's now add it to Designer so it'll always be a part of the software. Then, after we've added it as a brush, we'll use this brush is a simple document.

You should be looking at Designer's screen now.

   Go to the left side of the **Toolbar** and *click* on the middle **Pixel Persona**. We need to activate this Persona because this is where this brush will reside.
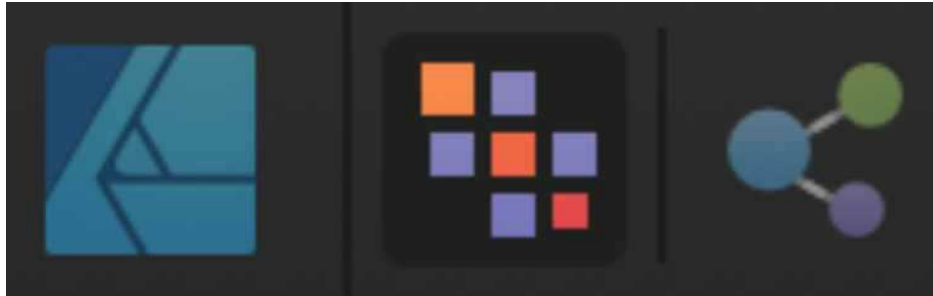
   Go to the **Studios** area and *click* on the **Brushes tab** so it's active and highlighted in white (see the below image).

   C*lick* on the **Brushes menu** icon (see the yellow rectangle in the below image). This will open a pop-out window where you need to *click* on **Create New Category** (see blue-highlighted selection).
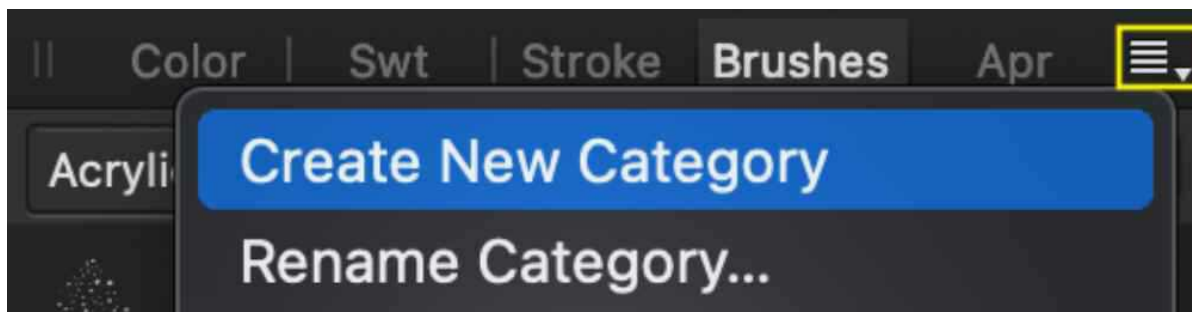

Although its default name is a generic Brushes, we want to change this to match the type of new brushes we'll be adding to Designer.

   Click again on the **Brushes menu** icon so its pop-out window appears again.

   Click on **Rename Category...** When you do this another pop-out window will appear where you need to type in the name of the brushes folder you want.
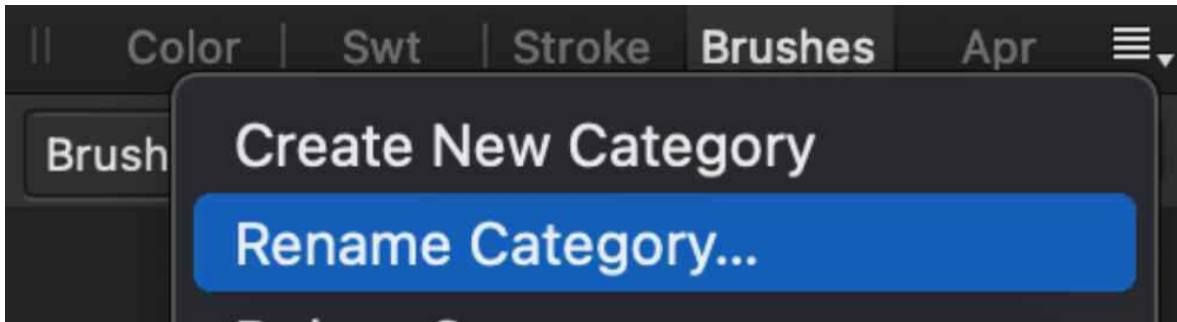
We'll *type* **Plants** because we'll eventually add other plant-like brushes to this folder. Name this folder anything you want.
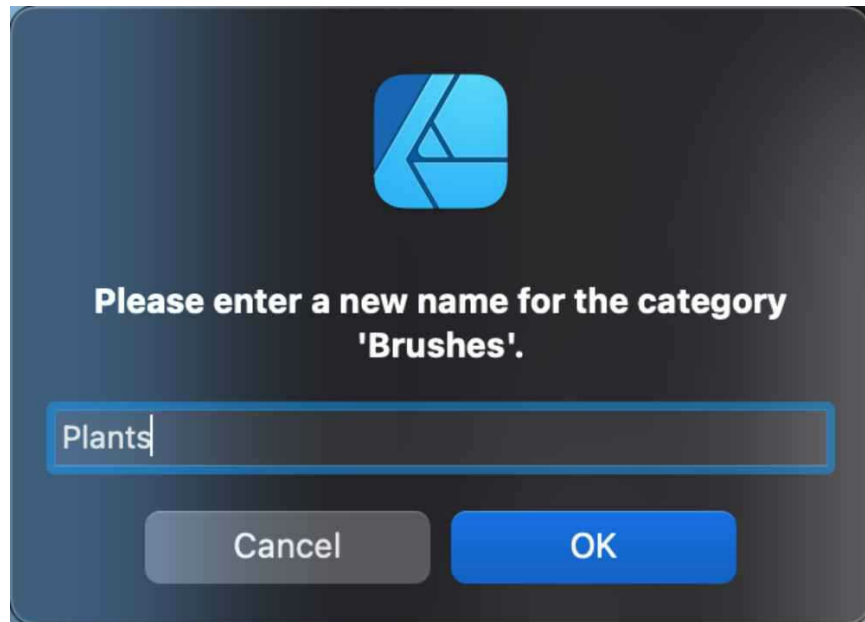
The brushes folder is now labelled as Plants.
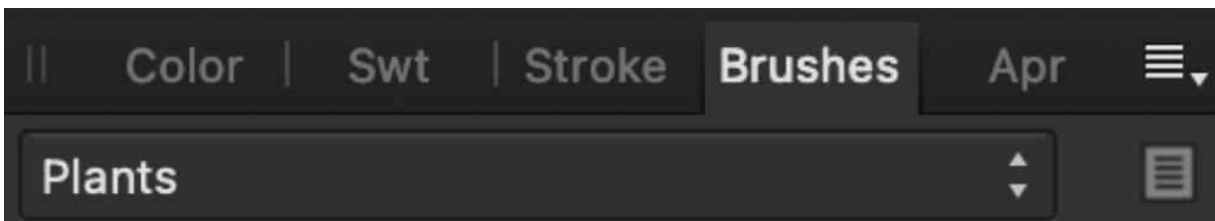
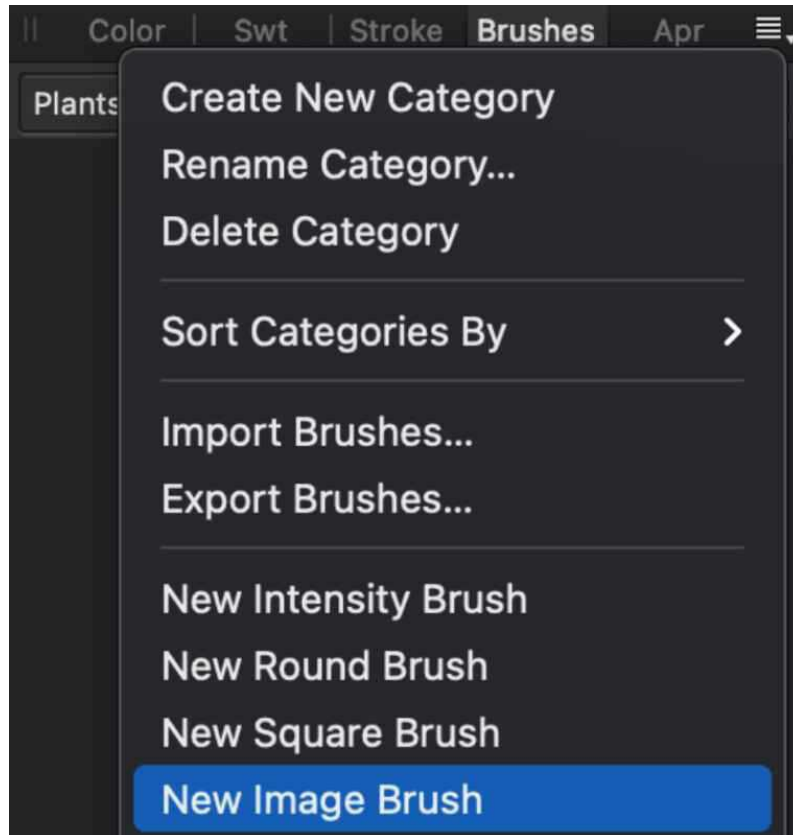*Click* again on the **Brushes menu** icon so its pop-out window appears again.

Click on **New Image Brush**. This will open the folder where we placed our Tree Brush.

Note: If we were using a drawing pad, we'd choose New Intensity Brush because that brush allows us to paint using different levels of pressure as we paint with our brushes. We have this pad, but for this lesson, we'll act like we don't.

  Click on the **Tree Brush.png** file and then *press* **Open**. When you do this, immediately our tree brush will appear in the Brushes panel area. Pay attention to the fact that we now have our very own brush we can use in Designer, and it's located inside our newly created Plants brush category.
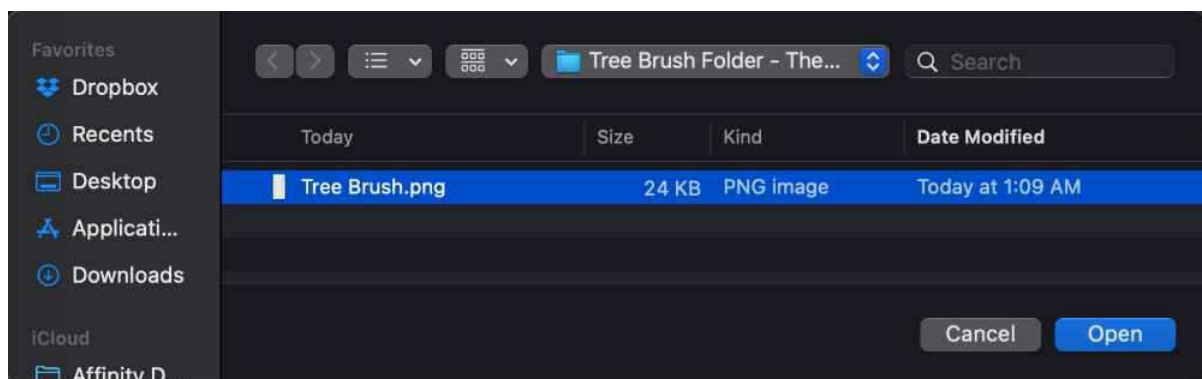
The next part is personal preference. But, because this is probably the first time you've seen these screens and sliders, we'll walk you through how we set up this new brush. After you've played around with these screens and sliders, you'll get a better grasp of how to do these adjustments.

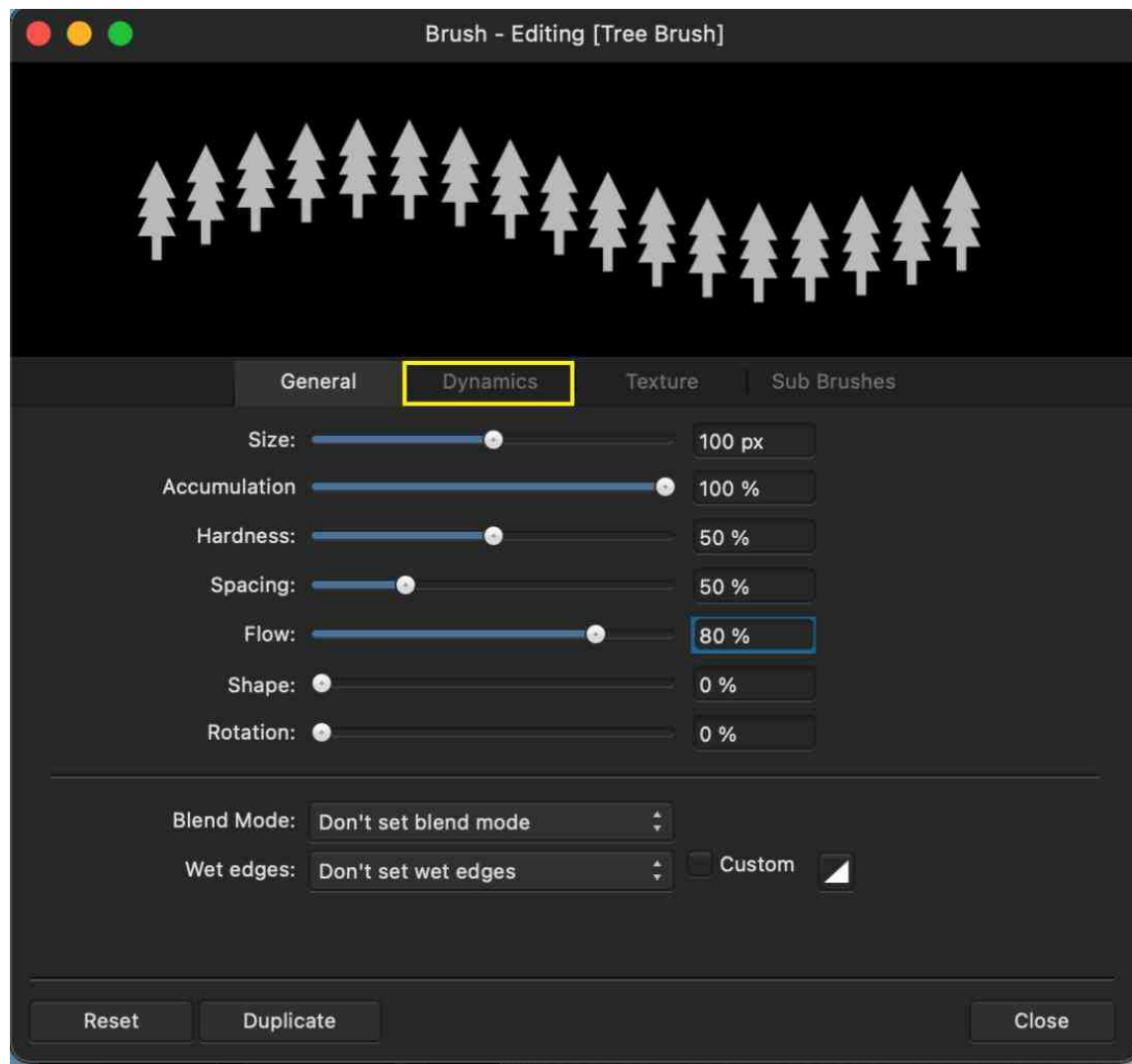   *Right-click* on the **Tree Brush** and *choose* **Edit Brush** from the pop-out window. This will open a window with lots of adjustment sliders. These sliders allow us to change the appearance of our brush as it's used to paint out its tree shapes out on our document.
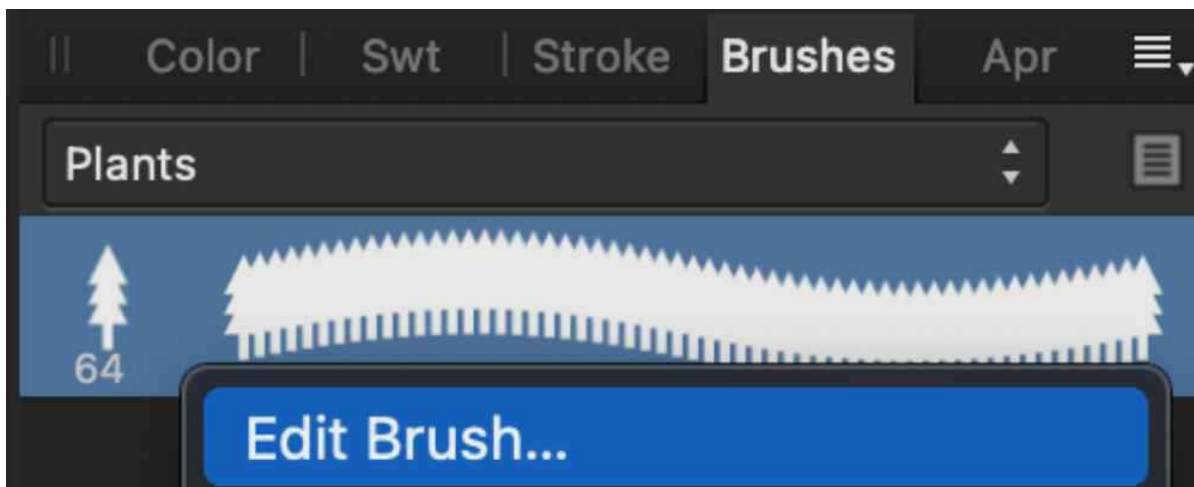
The pop-out window has a lot of adjustment sliders you can change. This is what we want you to do. *Click* & *drag* on **every one** and *move* it **all the way** to the **right** and then back again to the **left**. This is the best practice. It allows you to see the extremes of both sides. Then, you can work on finding the best value for your needs.

   Click the **Reset button** in the pop-out window's bottom left corner. This will reset all of the sliders to their original position.

Look at these two screenshots and set your adjustment sliders to the same values we have. When you are done matching your screen to ours, click on the Dynamics tab (see the yellow rectangle). This will open a similar pop-out window.

Brush - Editing [Tree Brush]

| General | Dynamics | Texture | Sub Brushes |

Size: 100 px

Accumulation 100 %

Hardness: 50 %

Spacing: 50 %

Flow: 80 %

Shape: 0 %

Rotation: 0 %

Blend Mode: Don't set blend mode

Wet edges: Don't set wet edges ☐ Custom

Reset   Duplicate   Close

*Set* the **adjustment values** you see in this second pop-out window to match your own screen. Look at the top of the pop-out window to see how our new brush will look inside our document as you use it like a paint brush. We love it how the trees are of different color and positioned differently than just standing in a line.

Press **Close** when you're done (see the yellow rectangle in the below image).
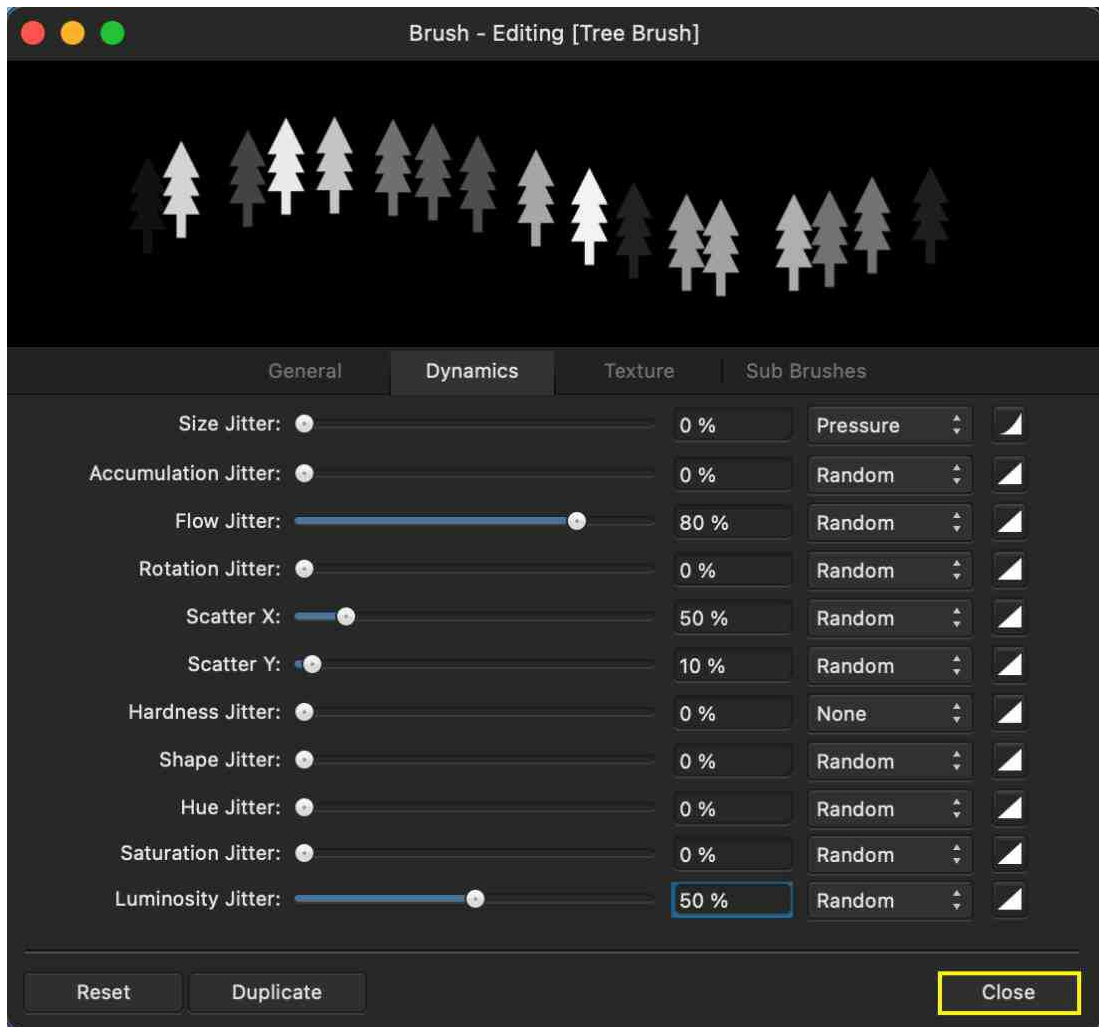
Look at the **Brushes panel** and see how our trees brush has changed in appearance (see blue-highlighted trees).
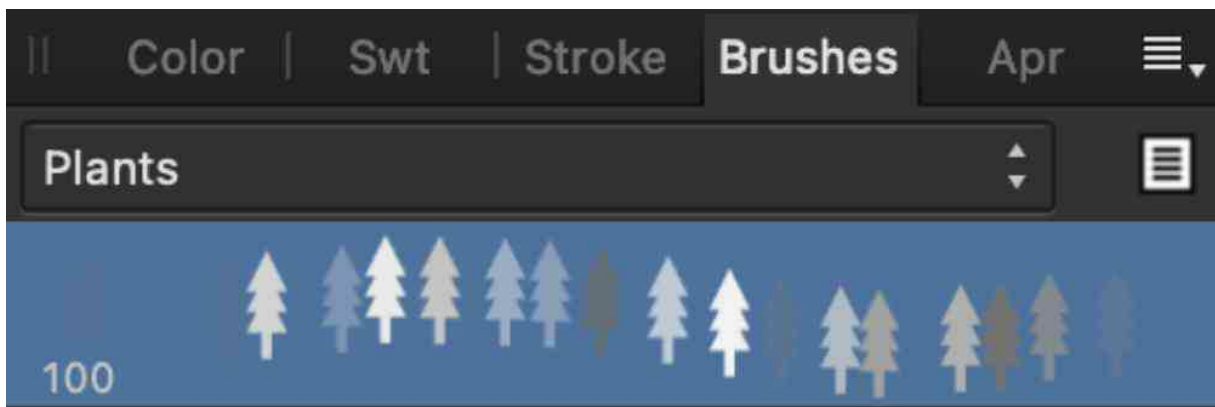
Now, let's see what our new brush looks like inside our document.

Go to the **Layers Panel** and *click* on the **Tree** (**Curve**) **layer**.

Right-click the **mouse button** and *select* **Cut**. This will remove the tree from our document.
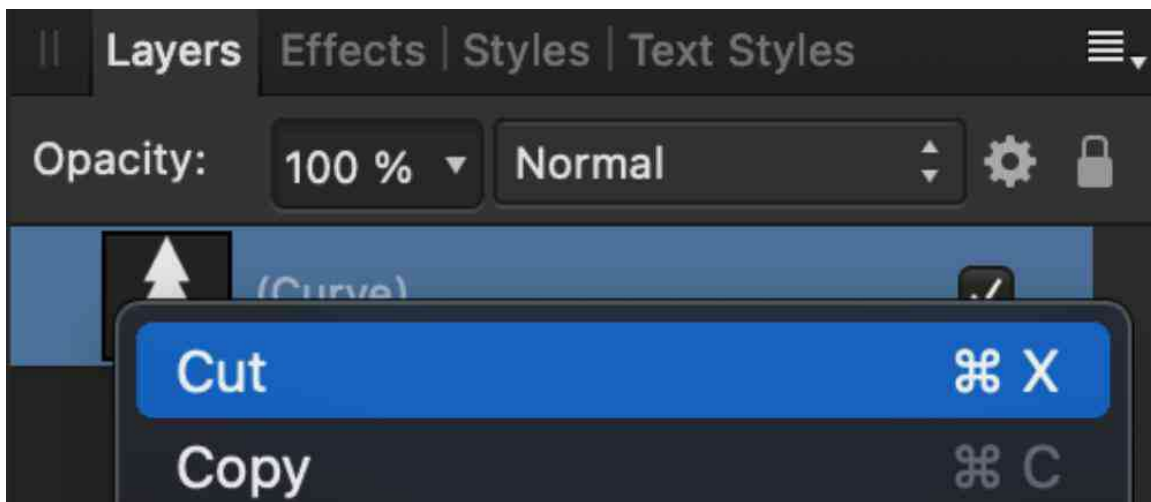
Ok. Let's now create a very simple landscape and add our trees to it. You should have a blank document in front of you.

Go to the **Toolbar** (far left side) and *click* on the left-side **Designer Persona**.
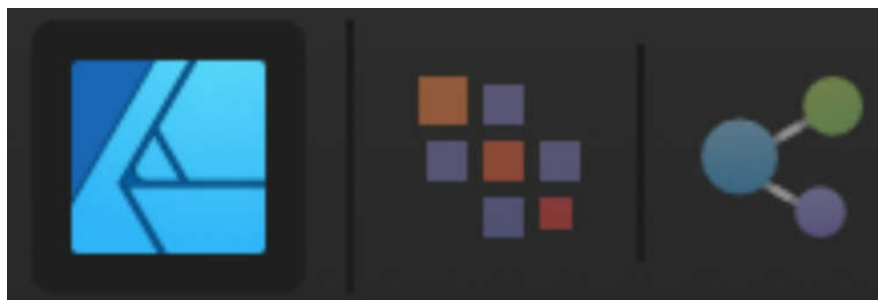
Click on the **Pencil Tool** so it's active.
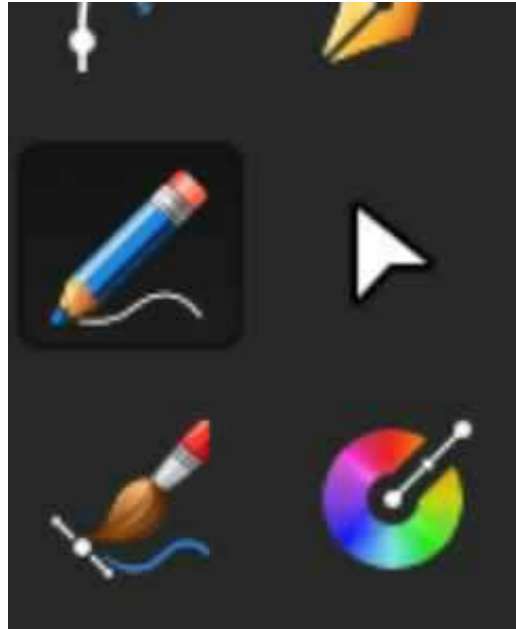
With the Pencil Tool, we are going to draw across the lower middle part of the document. We'll start outside the left-side of the document and drag a pencil line over the document. Then, we'll continue drawing underneath and around the left-side of the document to end again at the start. The blue square is the starting point and the red square is the ending point (look at the top-left part of the pencil circle.

See this screenshot to see what we mean.
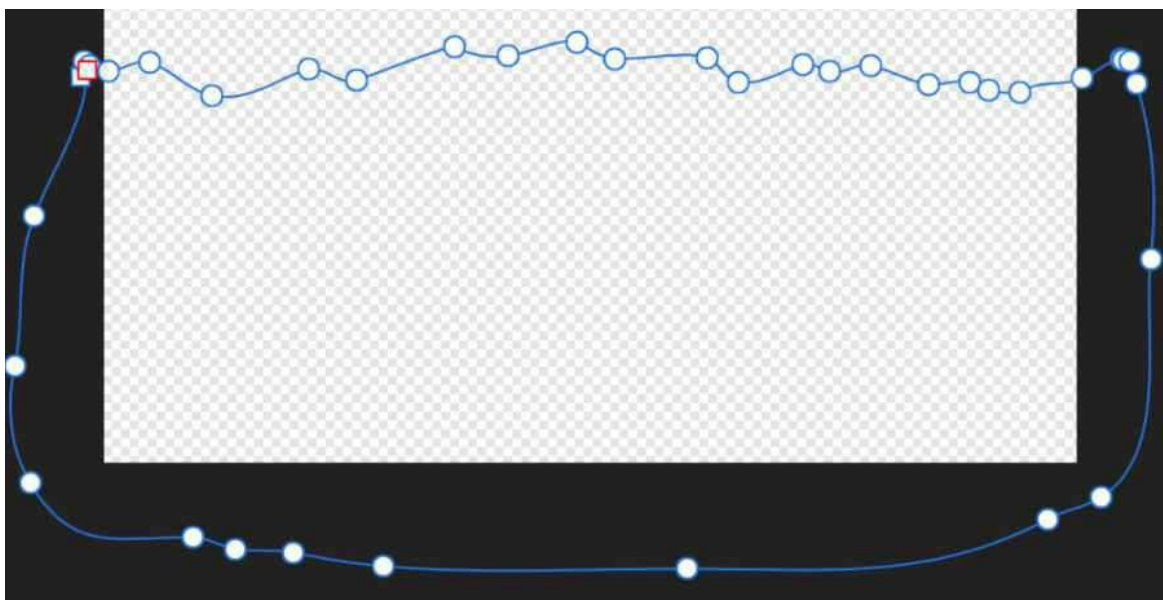
Go to the **Colors Panel** and *click* on its **menu** icon (see yellow rectangle).

Click on *Sliders*.
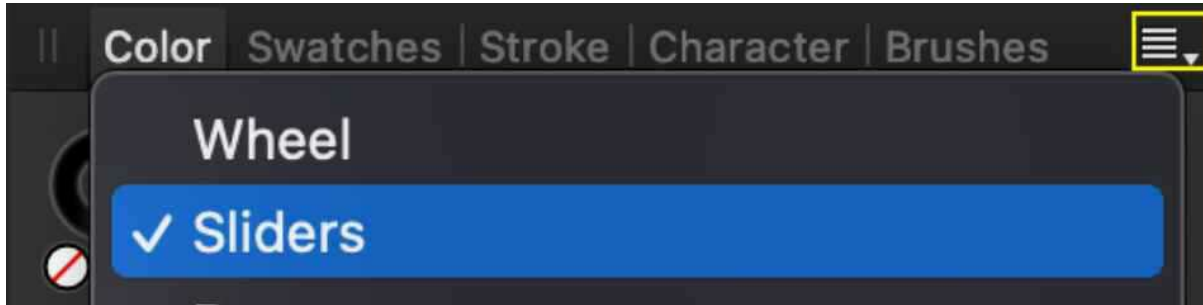
  Click on the **Color Format** pop-out box (see the white rectangle in the below image) and *click* on **RGB Hex**.

  Click on the **RGB Hex value box** (see the yellow rectangle in the below image) and *type* **09BBAA**. This will make the Fill area of our penciled-in area in our document to turn a nice green. Most importantly, the green you now see on your screen is the exact same green we are using while we're creating this lesson.
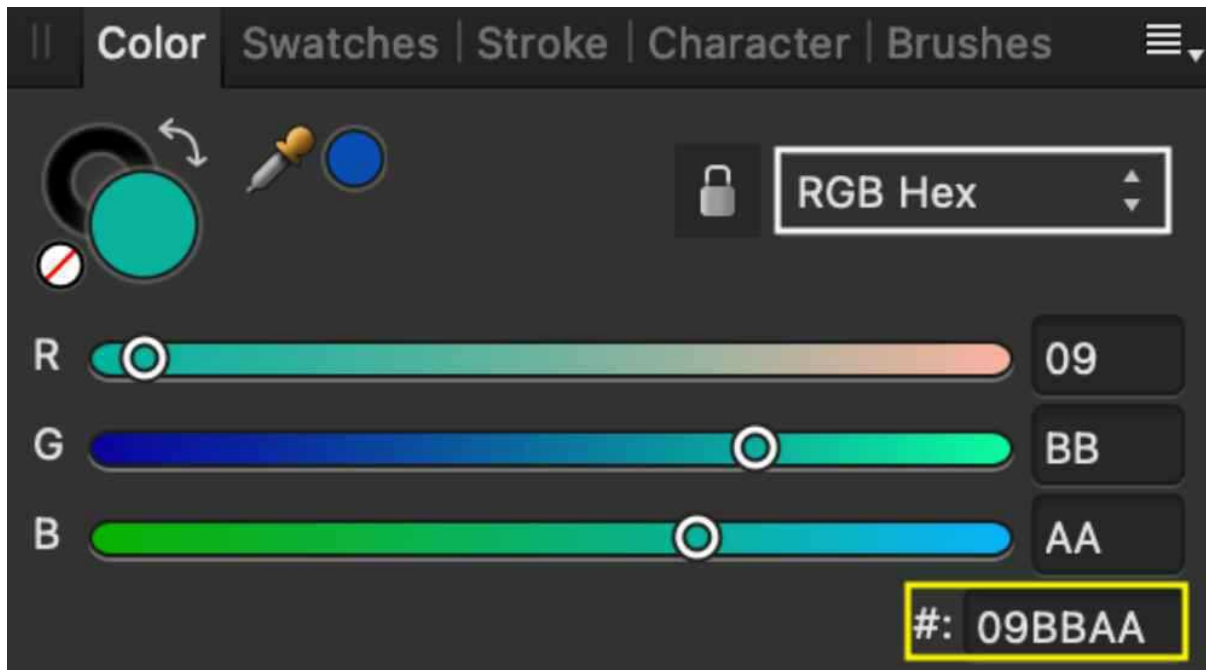
  Click now on the **Rectangle Tool** and *click* & *drag* a **rectangle** over the entire document. Remember our advice when placing a rectangle over a document? Try to keep as close to the borders as possible. It isn't always necessary, but it's a good practice to get used to.

Click again on the **RGB Hex value box** (yellow rectangle above) and *type* **0958BB**. This will make the rectangle turn a nice blue.

Click on the top **Rectangle layer** and *drag* it **beneath the green** (Curve) **layer** (see the yellow arrow for this action).
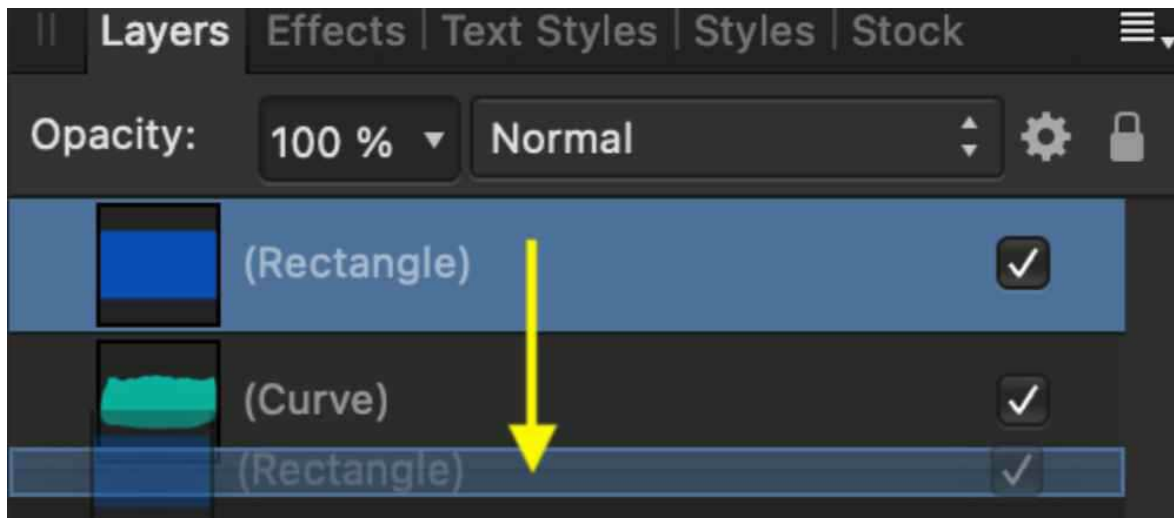
Go to the **Toolbar** (far left side) and *click* on the middle **Pixel Persona**.

Click on the **Paint Brush Tool** so it's active.
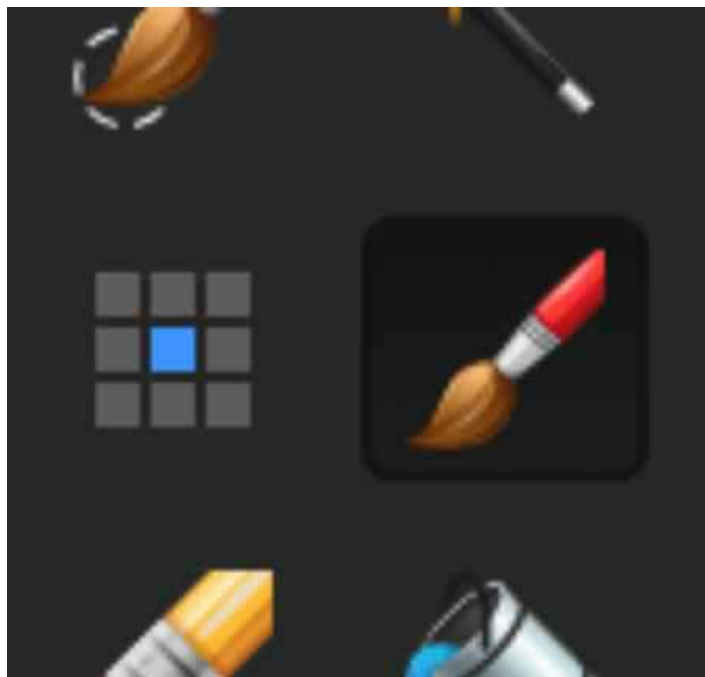
Go to the **Brushes panel** and you should see our **Tree** brush. Now, we are

going to use the Paint Brust and paint one line of our trees over the middle of our document.

Note: Make sure the bottom Rectangle layer is active (or highlighted in blue).

 Click & *drag* the **Paint Brush** over the grass line starting from just off the left side of the document and finish just off the right side of the document (off the document).

This is what our document looks like now. We purposefully cut out some of the top blue area as well as some of the grass area so the image would be smaller and fit the page better.

If you need to adjust where the trees are because maybe they are too small or you can see the bottoms of some of their trunks, then, use the Move Tool to rearrange the trees to the position you want them at.

Done. You now know how to create your own brush and how to use that new brush in a new document.

Please feel free to send us your work so we can look at it. We love interacting with our readers. Email us at: kuhlmanpublishing@yahoo.com

Finished. This ends this lesson.

Lesson 3: How to Use the Color Picker Tool

In this lesson, we're going to learn how to use the two Color Picker tools. One is located in the left-side Tools column and the other is located in the Colors panel to the right of the Fill/Stroke circles.

The one in the Tools column is used to sample colors within the document and allows us to be very specific down to the single pixels. The other in the Colors panel allows us to sample colors outside the document and in other open applications you have on our computer screen - like the color wheel on Adobe's color wheel website.

To begin this lesson, we need to create a document with an image in the top part and three circles underneath it. We'll guide you through this process.

This is the hyperlink to the image we'll be using in this lesson. Please have it already downloaded and placed in your Designer folder you should have created on your computer's desktop.

Remember, you can always contact us, and we'll send you the images for this book in an image folder. Email: kuhlmanpublishing@yahoo.com

https://pixabay.com/photos/fruit-basket-garden-vegetables-396622/

Create a **New Document** to these specifics:

- **Web - CD Digital Release**

- **Transparent background** (*unchecked*)

You should now have a blank white document in front of you. We're now going to place the fruit basket image in the top area of the document and then we're going to add three circles underneath it.

Go to the **Menu bar** - **File** - **Place...** When you click on this, a pop-out window will appear where you can choose the folder you want to open and find the image we'll be using. The folder is **Designer Images** and the image named **Lesson 3 - Fruit Basket**.

Press **Open** after you've highlighted the Fruit Basket image like what you

see in this screenshot of our computer.
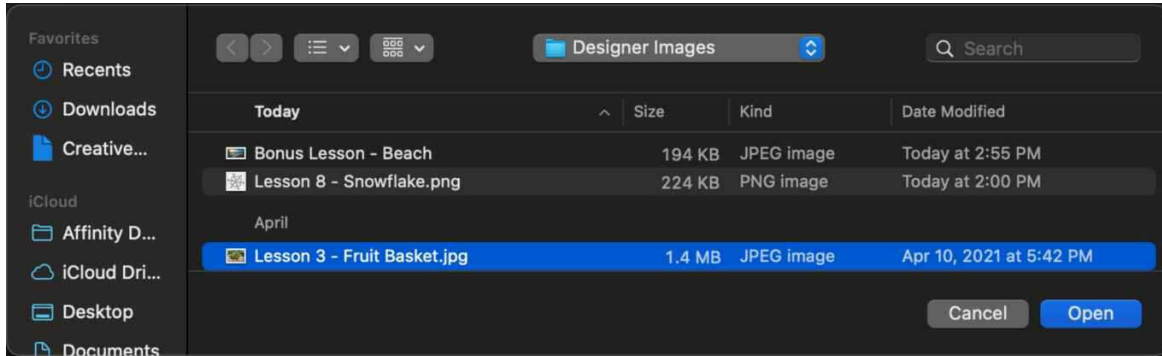
After you've pressed Open, you will see that your mouse's cursor has turned into a unique-looking cursor. It should look like an arrow pointing downwards to a circle.

  Click & *drag* the **Fruit Basket image** starting in the top-left corner of the document and extending down-and-to-the-right until the photo is filling both sides of white document.

Now, we'll add three circles in the white space beneath the image (if you want to look below, you can see the image with the three circles).

  Click on the **Ellipse Tool** so it's active. It's called an Ellipse because it can be a circle or an oblong circle shape. We used to wonder why it isn't simply called the Circle Tool.
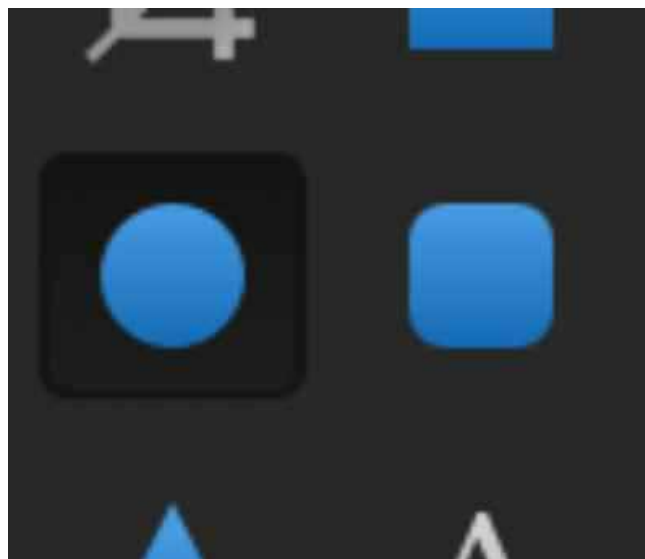
Hold-down the **Shift key** while you *click* & *drag* a **circle shape** in the left

side of the white space.

Click on the **Move Tool** (or use the shortcut of *pressing* the **V key** or *double-clicking* on the **canvas** area) so it's active.

Reposition the **circle shape** so it's in a good position (again, look below if you want to match your positioning like ours).

Press **Ctrl/Cmd+J** <u>twice</u> to ***duplicate*** the circle shape. Remember, when you duplicate a shape or object you can't see the duplicated shape until you move it off the duplicated shape.

This is what your Layers Panel should look like now. You should have three Ellipse layers.
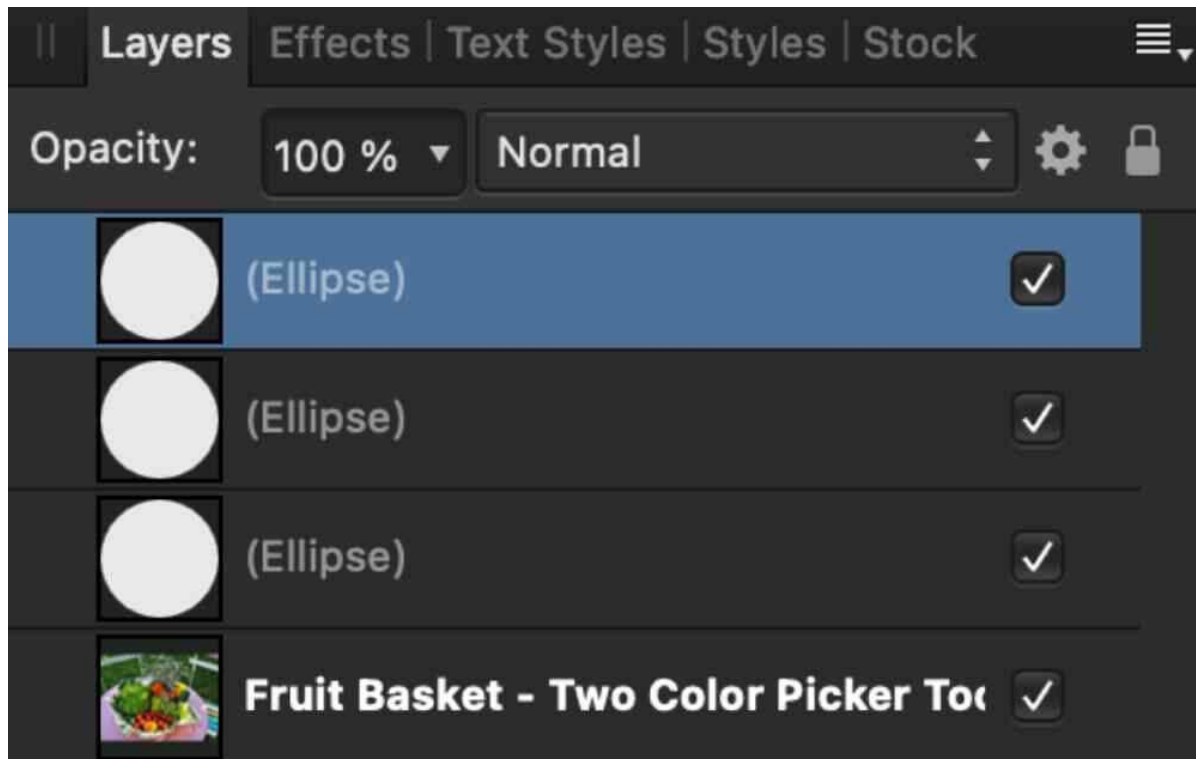
Click on the **circle shape** & *drag* it to the **middle** of the document.

Click on the left **circle again** and *drag* it to the **right side** of the document.

Note: Because we used Snapping in the last lesson, it will still be active for this lesson. Look at this image below and see how nicely Designer has snapped all three circles in a perfect line.
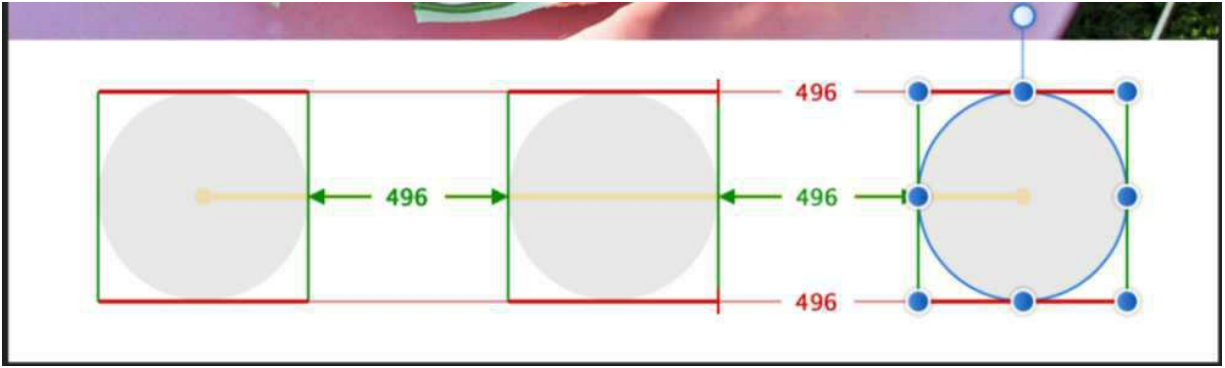
We are now done setting up our document to be able to start our lesson on how to use the two Color Picker tools.

If you look at the screen, you'll see two Color Picker tools. One will be in the left-side Tools column and the other is in the Colors panel in the top-right side of the screen.

The left-side tool will allow us to affect the colors inside the document and be pixel-level precise on our color selections. The right-side tool allows us to steal colors from anywhere (on and off Designer's screen), but it doesn't allow for the pixel-level precision of the tool on the left side.

We'll start with the Color Picker tool that's in the Tools column first. Since the right circle is already selected, we'll leave it alone and click on the Color Picker tool. We want the circle selected because as we use the tool, we'll be able to change the color of the selected circle as we click around our fruit basket photo.

 Click on the **Color Picker Tool** so it's activated. Activated tools have a darkened area around them.
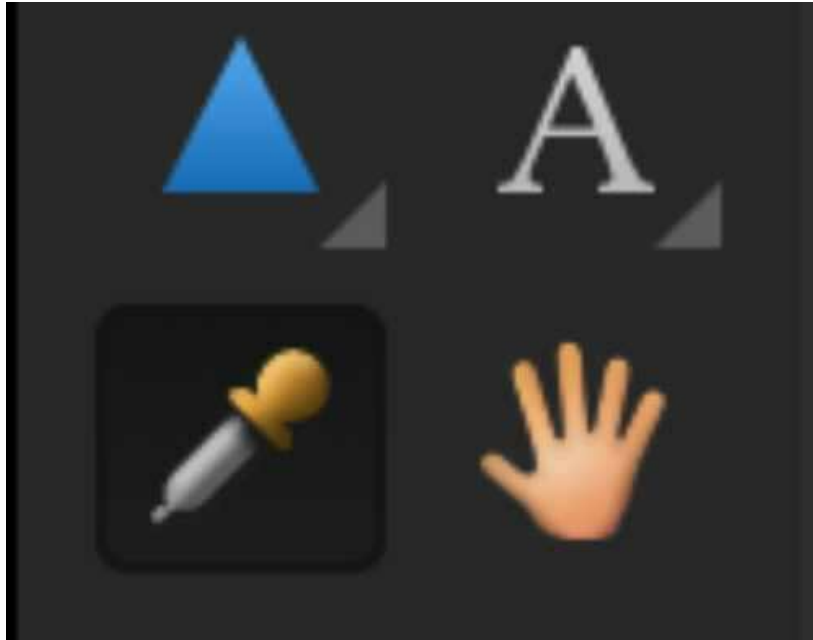
Go to the left-side of the **Contextual Toolbar** and *check on* **Apply to Selection** (see the yellow rectangle in the below image).

Make sure the **Radius** is also set to **Point (1x1).** It should already be so. This is the option we have to pick colors based on a one-pixel size. We can click on this drop-down menu (see the white rectangle) and choose a broader search area for colors.
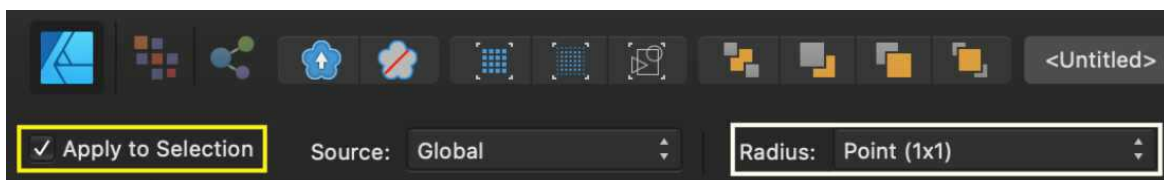
Click on the **Apricot** in the photo and watch how our right-most circle changes to that color.

Go to the **Layers Panel** and *click* on the **top layer** so it's highlighted in blue. This will select the middle circle.

Click on the **Red Pepper** in the middle of the basket. I guess, this makes it a food basket and not a fruit basket - my bad.

Go to the **Layers Panel** and *click* on the **bottom layer** so it's highlighted in blue. This will select the left circle.

Click on the **Yellow Pepper** and watch how the left circle turns yellow.

This is what the three circles now look like:
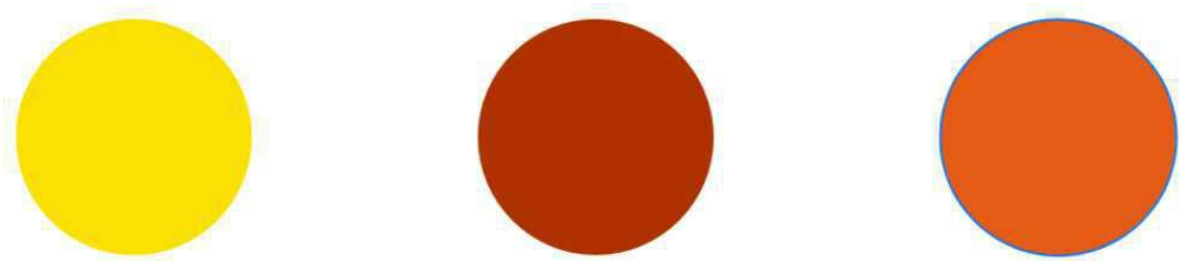
Now that you see how the Color Picker tool works by selecting colors from the image in our document, let's do some close-up work.

Zoom into the **Apricot** to where the individual pixels are quite large.
Note: There are several ways to zoom into a document:

- *Press* **Ctrl**/**Cmd +**. When you do this action.
- *Hold-down* the **Alt key** and *turn* the **mouse's wheel**.
- *Use* your **trackpad** and pull two fingers apart.

You can see in the image below we zoomed into the area of the water droplet in the top-center portion of the fruit. Notice how you can see individual square pixels.

Optional: When you zoom into the document, you should also use the View Tool (looks like a hand). You can use this by clicking on the View Tool or by holding-down the Space bar to grab the document and then you can more precisely zoom into the document.

For this next part, we don't need to look at the individual circles at the bottom of our document. All we want you to look at is the Color Wheel and how when you click on individual pixels the wheel will move. It won't be a huge move, but it'll move for sure.
Practice: *Click* on **five individual pixels** and watch the Color Wheel move. It moves like it does because the Color Picker Tool is sampling new colors per pixel clicked on.

Let's continue...

Now, we're going to change the Radius of the sampling cursor to its largest setting (257x257) and then we'll click around our zoomed in Apricot. You'll see that the Color Wheel doesn't adjust itself as much because the sampling range (or Radius) has been increased by 257x.

To do this...

Go to the **Contextual Toolbar** and *click* on the **Radius' drop-down menu** (see the below image) and *select* **Average (257x257)**.
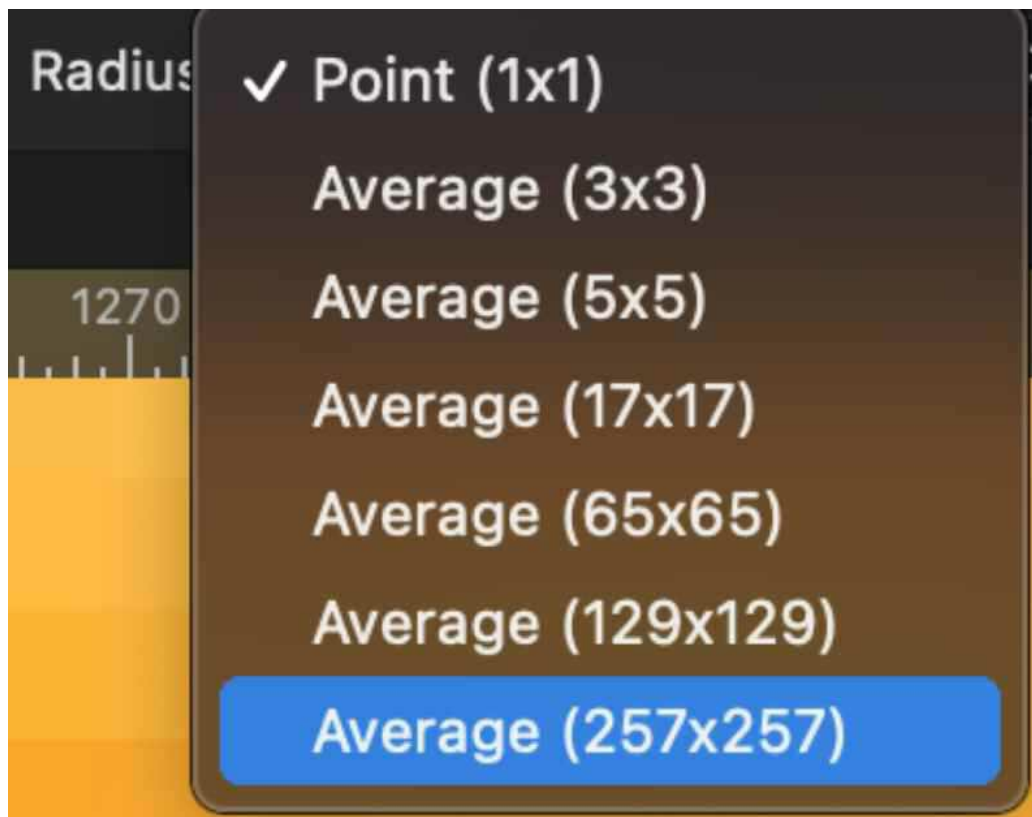
Practice: Again, *click* on **five individual pixels** and look at how much the Color Wheel changes. It shouldn't change as much when the Radius was set at 1x1.

Another option that this Color Picker gives us is to *turn off* the **Apply to Selection** button (on the left-side of the Contextual Toolbar) and while we click on different colorful objects, the "picked" color will be saved in the Colors panel area of the screen.

So, let's do this.

Go to the **Contextual Toolbar** and *uncheck* **Apply to Selection**.

Click on the **Apricot** again and *look* at the **small circle** to the right of the Fill/Stroke circles in the Colors panel turn that same color (see the yellow square in the below image). The Apricot's color is now saved in this circle.

We can now apply this Apricot color to one of our circles.

 Click on the **Move Tool** (*press* **V** or *double-click* on the **canvas**).

 Click on the **middle circle** so it's selected. We know it's selected because it is now surrounded by the blue nodes and the object's layer is highlighted in blue in the Layers Panel.

 Click once on the **sampled color circle** (inside yellow square in the above image) and watch how the selected circle at the bottom of our document also changes this color.

Note: This action of selecting an object inside the document with the Color Picker Tool and thereby changing the sample color circle is the same action for both Color Picker Tools. When you click on something to "pick" its color, that picked color will be visual in this little sample color circle in the Colors Panel. Then, to apply this new color to a selected object in our document, all you have to do is click on it. This probably sounds very confusing right now, but once you do this process two or three times, you'll totally understand what to do.

Now that we've worked with the Color Picker Tool that's located in the Tools column, let's now work with the Color Picker Tool that's located in the Colors Panel. Both look exactly alike, and they are, but they just have different

functions.

This is how this second tool works. When we click on it, we have to hold-down the mouse button we used to click on it and then drag the cursor over a color in our document (or outside) that we want to select and then release the mouse button. The color is selected where and when we release the mouse button.

Again, this probably sounds confusing at first, but once you've done it a few times it gets easier to do.

For this lesson, we'll click & drag the Color Picker Tool over the red-colored Snapping Tool in the Toolbar and show you how it works. Then, we'll click on the far-left circle at the bottom of our document and change its color by clicking on the small color sample circle.

Let's begin...

  Click on the **Color Picker Tool** located in the Colors panel and in one motion *drag* **its unique magnifying-looking cursor** to the Toolbar where the Snapping icon is and when the cursor is over the red-colored shape, *release* the **mouse's button** (see black arrow for this action). As soon as the mouse button is released the chosen color is immediately placed inside the sample circle (see yellow arrow for this transference of color).
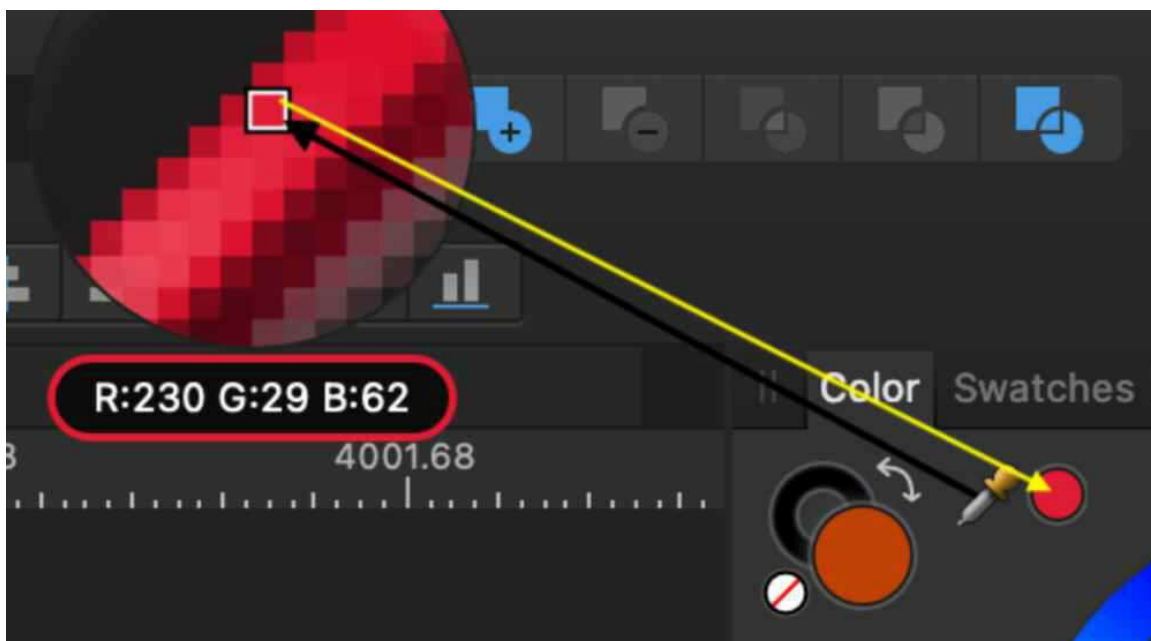
Click on the **left circle** inside the document so it's selected and surrounded by blue nodes (see the below image for reference).

Click on the **color sample circle** and watch how the circle in the document changes to this color (see the black arrow in the below image for this color change action).
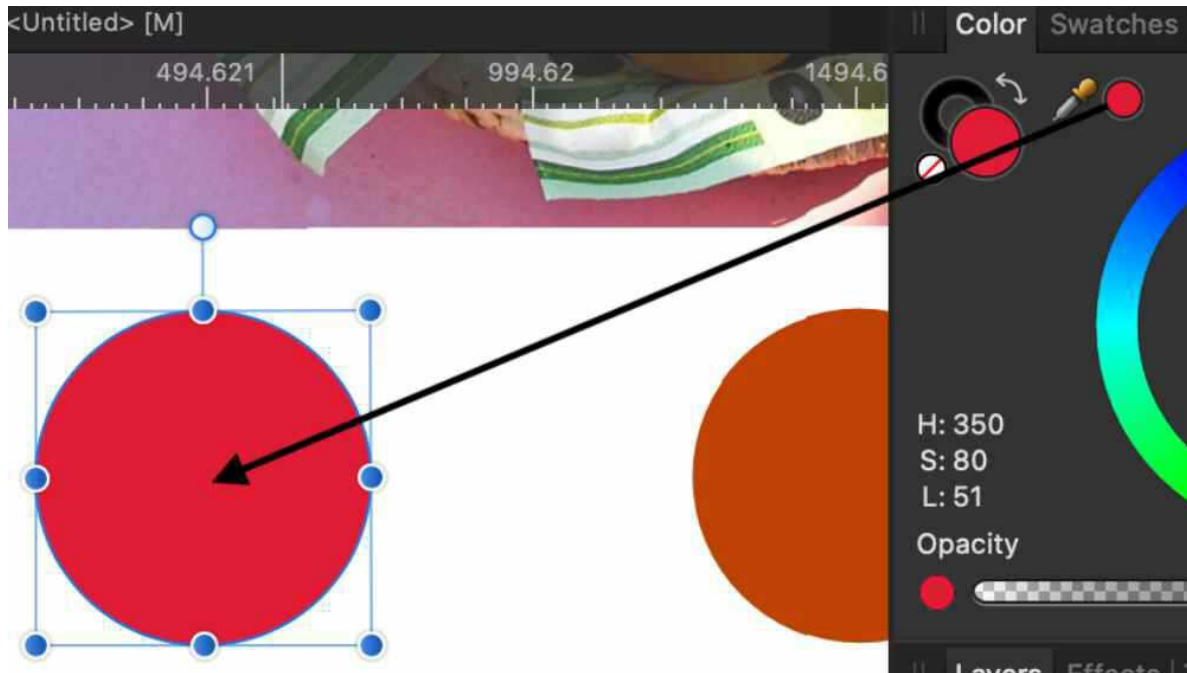
Done. Now you know how to use the two Color Picker Tools on both sides of Designer's screen. This skill is important because you can now take the colors from any source and apply it to your own designs and works.

Finished. This ends this lesson.